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TAGS: [PREL](#) [MASS](#) [PHUM](#) [RW](#)  
SUBJECT: DEMARCHE ON REMOVAL OF 14TH BATTALION COMMANDER

REF: STATE 36459

Classified By: Ambassador Michael R. Arietti, reason 1.4 (B/D)

¶1. (C) Per reftel dated March 22, the Embassy sent Note 040 to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on March 23, quoted in part as follows: "The United States requests that the Government of Rwanda advise it of the name of the replacement commander of the 14th battalion." In this note the Embassy referred to an earlier Note from the GOR pledging to replace 14th battalion commander LTC Ruzibiza if asked to do so.

¶2. (C) Subsequent to this note, Mission made several approaches to the Rwandans, asking for the name of the replacement commander. The Rwandans have on several occasions pledged to convey the name to us. For example, on March 30, polchief met with Foreign Ministry IO and Americas Director Ben Rutsinga, who read Note 040 over the telephone to Army Chief of Staff General Kayonga, obtained his pledge to name a new commander, and then personally delivered the note to Kayonga later in the day. As recently as April 16, Acting DCM spoke with Foreign Ministry Minister of State Rosemary Museminali, reminding her of the written pledge made by the GOR, and the responding diplomatic note from the Mission requesting the naming of a new commander. On all occasions, GOR personnel have replied that the name will be forthcoming.

¶3. (C) We continue to press the GOR on the need for the naming of the new commander, with accompanying biographic information, to permit completion of the Leahy vetting requirements. We are mindful of the upcoming May dates for the airlift of two battalions, including the 14th, to Darfur by USG-contracted aircraft, and the need for the Leahy vetting of the new commander prior to the 14th's airlift.

ARIETTI